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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
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SUBJECT: "New Tomato Varieties"--Information from the Agricultural Research Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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Most of us who garden don't wait for that one day of balmy weather to begin thinking about this season's garden. When the postman delivers the first seed catalog...we start dreaming. During the war...home gardeners could not do much experimenting. We had to stick with the tried and true.

But now that the war is over...our dreams turn toward new varieties developed during the past few years. We want to try them out for a variety of reasons. Some of us want the new varieties simply for the novelty. Our gardens will have interest because "something new has been added." Others look for new varieties to beat the weather...maybe it's a late spring, or a long, hot dry summer...or an early frost. Still others of us want new varieties that will resist disease. And I suppose all of us are interested in new varieties with better eating quality.

Well...the plant breeders have not been idle during the war years. Not long ago...the U. S. Department of Agriculture announced that some sixty scientists in the Federal and State Experiment Stations are working on research studies on tomatoes alone.

They have developed a number of new tomato varieties in this work.... extending from an early New Hampshire Victory suitable for the short New England summers...to the Pearl Harbor tomato that flourishes in Hawaii's sub-tropical climate.

One of the best known of the new varieties is the Pan America. This is a cross between a wild tomato from the Andes mountains in Peru and the

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well-known Marglobe of the United States. The Pan America combines the good qualities of the Marglobe with the wilt resistance of the Peruvian tomato.

Plant scientists in the State Experiment Station have developed new tomato varieties adapted to meet special needs and growing conditions in the different states.

You may have already heard of some of these. For example...there's the Chatham (Chattem)--an early Michigan variety. The Red Cloud and Sioux varieties were developed in Nebraska. Another new one is the Bounty of North Dakota.

Perhaps you have also heard of the new stemless varieties--the Pennorange --a yellow tomato...and the Pennred. Both of these from the Pennsylvania Experiment Station. Why are they called stemless? Well...normally the tomato joint breaks off about a half inch or three quarters of an inch above the calyx when you pull the tomato from the vine. This leaves a little stem on the tomato. But in these new stemless varieties...the joint doesn't break off. Instead...the calyx remains on the joint or stem. And you have stemless tomatoes. Advantage--say the plant scientists--is that there are no stems to injure other fruits in the container.

One of the most interesting of the new tomato varieties is the Pearl Harbor...developed as you would guess in Hawaii by the Agricultural Experiment Station there. Hawaiian tomato growers welcome the Pearl Harbor because of its vigorous resistance to spotted wilt...which is a problem in that area. Surprising thing about the Pearl Harbor is that one of its parents is the Bounty ...a tomato developed by the North Dakota Experiment Station and especially adapted to the short growing season of North Dakota.

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